THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (MAJOR GENERAL (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The Golden Quadrilateral (GQ) component of National Highway Development Project (NHDP) was targeted for completion by December, 2004. However, we have ourselves pre-poned the target for substantial completion by December, 2003. There are some delays and bottlenecks on account of various formalities which were required to be completed particularly in respect of externally aided projects, land acquisition, environmental clearance and law and order problems. These are being removed with the help of concerned authorities/State Governments. All parameters of the project are being monitored regularlay and GQ is targeted for substantial completion by December, 2003.

Universal Service Obligation in basic telephony

*374. SHRI RAJU PARMAR:
SHRI BHAGATRAM MANHAR:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) what are the recommendations of the TRAI and Attorney General of India with regard to Universal Service Obligation (USO) in basic telephony as per the National Telecom Policy of 1999; and

(b) where do the recommendations of the TRAI and Attorney General of India, stand in the year 2002 as far as USO and village telephony is concerned?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): (a) The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) have recommended appointment of universal service levy @ 5% of Adjusted Gross Revenue (AGR). This levy is a part of the total service license fee to be paid by the various service providers such as Basic, Cellular, National and International long Distance, Paging, Infrastructure Provider Category-II, Very Small Aperture Terminal (VSAT). The funds created by the Universal Service Levy shall be spent in rural and remote areas on both public access telephones or community telephones ment for public use and individual household telephones in net high-cost rural/remote areas. The implementation of USO will be divided into two clearly identifiable streams:—

Stream I: Provision of Public Telecom and Information Services. This includes:—

(a) Installation of VPTs in the remaining villages (over and above the villages identified as per the 1991 census).

(b) Provision of additional rural community phones after achieving the target of one VPT in every village.

(c) Replacement of VPTs installed before 01.04.2002.

(d) Up gradation of VPTs to Public Telecom and Info Centres (PTICs).

(e) Installation of High Speed PTICs (HPTICs).

Stream II: Provision of household telephones in Net high Cost areas (rural/remote).

Stream I will be given priority in respect of disbursement of funds over Stream II.

No recommendations with regard to Universal Service Obligation has been received form the Attorney General of India.

(b) The Universal Service Support Policy, on the recommendations of TRAI, as accepted by the Government, has taken effect from 01.04.2002. Guidelines in this regard have also been issued.

Budget for printing challan forms

*375. SHRI B.P. SINGHAL: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the annual budget for printing challan forms for use in Employees Provident Fund;

(b) the number of forms provided per year;

(c) the number of forms received per year;

(d) whether it is a fact that the Department concerned is not able to supply forms to the depositors and they have to print it on their own; and

(e) if so, whether Government would rectify this position?